RAJYA SABHA

Friday, the 7th December, 2007/16 *Agrahayana*, 1929 (*Saka*)

The House met at eleven of the clock,

MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Failure of MCI to fill up vacant posts

'326. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether after learning that the Medical Council of India (MCI) has failed to implement directions to fill up the vacant posts, the Delhi High Court has directed Health Secretaries eight States and Vice-Chancellors of ten universities to explain the reason for delay in plementing the orders;

(b) if so, what were the reasons put forward by the States for not complying with the rders of the High Court to fill all the vacancies in the Medical Council; and

(c) what are the steps now being considered to implement the orders of the High Court to fill up all the vacancies?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (c) The Medical Council of India (MCI) is constituted by the Central Government as per the provisions of Indian Medical Council Act, 1956, under various categories through election/nomination. A Civil Writ petition - Dr. Girish Tyagi *versus* Union of India & Others was filed in the High Court of Delhi alleging non-filling of vacancies of members in MCI. During the course of the hearing of the case, the Hon'ble Court monitored filling up of vacancies of members of MCI and gave directions on 28th September, 2006, to the universities to send the names of elected representatives against vacancies of Members of MCI to the Central Government within ten weeks. The Hon'ble Court also directed the concerned State Medical Councils/States to complete the election of members from amongst the Registered Medical Graduates within one month and send the name of elected members to the Central Government. Subsequently, action taken report on filling up of vacancies was submitted before the Court by the Central Government. On 19th January, 2007, the Hon'ble High Cour irected concerned authorities of 10 universities and 8 State Governments who had failed tc mply with the High Court order dated 28.09.07, to be present in the Court on the next date of hearing along with the records on the subject.

The State Government submitted before the Hon'ble High Court that due to non-ilability of up-to-date State Medical Registers, adequate fund, non-appointment of

Returning Officers, the election process could not be completed. Also the universities submitted before the Court that the election process could not be completed as Senate/Court were non-existent and in some other universities where these bodies existed, they did not meet for quite some time and, therefore, the elction of Members of MCI could not be held.

As per the directions of the Court, 110 out of 130 vacancies of Members of MCI have been filled up. A Statement indicating the occupancy position of members of MCI is enclosed as statement.

Statement

Occupancy postion of Members in MCI

(as on Date)

Sl.No.	Section	Sanctioned	Vacant
1.	Section 3 (1) (a) - State Government nominee	30	4
2.	Section 3 (1) (b) - Universities Category	64	6
3.	Section 3 (1) (c) - State RMG category	21	7
4.	Section 3 (1) (d) - Licentiate category	7*	7*
5.	Section 3 (1) (e) - Central Government Nominee category	8	-
	TOTAL	130	24

*Award of Licentiate qualification has been dispensed with since 1960s.

SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Sir, I would like to inform the hon. Minister that after the High Court directives the MCI has filled up many positions. But bulk of the time is going in recognising new colleges, post-graduate degrees, etc. I would like to know from the hon. Minisiter whether the MCI has taken any action against the doctors who are proved to have been medically negligent or involved in medical crimes. The legal and consumer courts have taken action against many doctors across the country. But the people seem to have lost faith in the MCI as a watch-dog of medical ethics. How many complaints have been filed against the doctors with the MCI and the State Medical Councils over the past five years? Against how many doctors has the MCI actually taken action?

DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS: Sir, the Medical Council of India is responsible for the quality of medical education in this country and, by virtue of this, it goes around inspecting the institutions and recommend to the Government whether to recognise them or to renew their registration and so on. As far as individual medical negligence of doctors is concerned, the respective State Medical Councils are responsible for their conduct. If there is any complaint agaist any doctors *per se,* they could complain to the respective State Medical Councils. If the State Medical Councils fail in their duties, the National Council could take actions against doctors of deregistering or de-recognition or suspension of their registration and so on and so forth.

SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the news reports that the Government is toying with the idea of creating a separate Department of Medical Education in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare are true and,

if it is so, how it will be different from the charter of MCI. Will it undermine the authority of the MCI?

DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS: Sir, the Medical Council of India is currently responsible for the undergraduate courses by an Act of the Parliament and the Government of India is responsible for the post-graduate courses. In some of the countries, they have one common post-graduate board. In India, we have two authorities to regulate the post-graduate medical education; one is the Medical Council of India and the second is the National Board of Examination. Over the years, unfortunately, the Medical Council of India-regulated post-graduate education has not been recognised in many countries internationally except in the neighbouring countries. But as far as the National Board of Examination is concerned, there has been wider acceptance internationally because of the standards of education and its quality, and it follows one single pattern of examination throughout the country. In fact, the United Kingdom, some of the Middle-East countries and some other European countries were voluntarily requesting for reciprocal recognition of these courses. To harmonise both these, we have set up a Committee under Dr. Ranjit Roy Choudhary. He has made some recommendations. Certainly, we have not taken any decision yet. We will take a comprehensive view of all the stakeholders and then we will take a decision accordingly.

SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether non-availability of eligible doctors is the reason for not filling up the vacancies. If so, is there any proposal to set up new medical colleges in various States?

DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS: Sir, when we talk of doctor's community, health human resources, actually, it includes not only doctors, but nurses, paramedics, dentists, ASHAs, ANMs, the Indian System of Medicine, Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani, all those are also here. So far as availability of doctors is concerned, for example, there are nearly 7,00,000 allopathic and MBBS doctors in this country. Out of which, only 10 per cent serve in the rural areas. Out of 7,00,000, 70,000 serve in the rural areas. So, there are doctors, but most of them are concentrating in cities, metros and towns. There is a problem in rural areas. Some of the hon. Members have also raised an issue about some students protesting against one year compulsory rural posting, as well. Sir, 72 per cent of the people live in rural areas. They have only 25 to 30 per cent access to health care, in fact, in these 60 years of post-Independence. So, to revive this entire concept of rural health care infrastructure, we have now put up the National Rural Health Mission for improving the infrastructure as well as manpower and putting up specialist doctors and students in the rural areas.

Coming to medical colleges, *per se*, Sir, there are approximately 270 medical colleges in this country. Out of which, 180 are only in six States, that is, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Maharashtra. Rest of the 23 States have nearly 100 medical colleges put together. There is a huge lacuna in the States of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, etc. Bihar has only eight medical colleges for a population of 110 million. Uttar Pradesh has 16 and Madhya Pradesh has 8 of them. In the North East also, there has been a huge lacuna. For this, we are now going in for changing the regulation so that even a district headquarters hospital, a Government hospital, could start medical colleges by having public-private partnership in these hard areas, in these National Rural Health Mission areas, including the North East. So, when we change the regulations, I am sure there will be a lot of medical colleges set up with the participation of local Governments. In the Eleventh Five Year Plan also we have a lot of funds allocated for helping the State Governments to set up these institutions and colleges.

DR. BIMAL JALAN: Sir, I just want to put a supplementary question on the issue raised by Shrimati Shobhana Bhartia on post-graduate education. I would like to know whether there is a proposal to take over post-graduate education or set up a separate Government machinery to regulate or supervise post-graduate education. We all accept that the post-graduate education in our coutry is not up to the standard that all of us desire. However, it seems to me that the Government taking it over is not going to improve the matter. Of the top, say, 25 universities in the world, which we would like to compare with our universities, does any one of these universities come under direct control of the Government of that country? Let us take the 25 best post-graduate medical universities in the world. Are there any countries like Europe, the USA, the UK, where they come under direct control of the Government?

DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS: Sir, I have already answered the first part of the question of the hon. Member saying that there is a Committee under Dr. Ranjit Roy Choudhury. In fact, today the post-graduate education comes under the Government of India. The Government of India runs it. The Government is responsible for it. So far as under-graduate education is concerned, it is the responsibility of the Medical Council of India. Today, the Government is responsible for the post-graduate medical education. After the recommendations of the Ranjit Roy Choudhury Committee, it is not that the Government is going to takeover anything like that. In fact, it is going to be a body or an authority. If at all we do that, it will be done after wider discussions with the stakeholders. We are taking a decision on that.

In reply to second part of the supplementary, I would say, the top institutions of the world, like, the Harvard University, Johns Hopkins University, Stanford University, are all in the private sector in their respective countries. Also, some of the institutions in India are doing well. But the best institutions in the field of undergraduate and post-graduate education are, today, in the Government sector. And we tend to regulate as well as increase the quality of these institutions. We are going in for a lot of curriculum changes, as such, both for the undergraduate and post-graduate education because the curriculum that we are following today is a little outdated. Hence we are going in for a new curriculum change according to the modern concepts, modern technology development.

DR. BIMAL JALAN: Sir, just a small clarification...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Preferably not.

DR. BIMAL JALAN: If you say so, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Shrimati Prema Cariappa.

SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Sir, would the hon. Minister be pleased to mention the names of the States and the Universities, whose Vice-Chancellors have been given a direction by the Delhi High Court seeking explanation for the delay in filling up the vacancies? I would also like to know the list of the total number of members of the MCI till date mentioning their date of appointment and other details. He may give it in writing if he does not have the information with him now.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS: Out of a total of 130 vacancies, which were earlier there, more than half of them have been filled up after the High Court's order. So, today, out of 130 vacancies, only 24 vacancies are there. Out of these, seven of them are to be licentiate degree holders; six of them are from the Universities and seven are from the registered

medical graduate category. And the names of the Universities are A.P. Singh University, University of Rajasthan, Utkal University, Ranchi University, Mahatma Gandhi University, Calicut University, Magadh University, University of Kashmir, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj University, Lucknow, and then some University of Kanpur. The names of States are Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Gujarat, Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand.

Declining growth rate of agriculture

*327. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the growth rate of agriculture is declining;

(b) if so, the comparative details thereof during the last three years alongwith the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken to improve the situation of agriculture in future?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Agriculture growth rate is subject to fluctuations due to influence of a number of factors like monsoon, weather, water and quality of land, among others. As per data compiled by the Central Statistical Organization (CSO), the growth rate of agriculture and allied sectors during the last three years in the country as measured in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at constant 1999-2000 prices has been zero per cent in 2004-05, six per cent in 2005-06 and 2.7 per cent in 2006-07. However, the average growth rate of the sector during the last two years has been 4.35 per cent.

(c) The National Development Council (NDC) in its 53rd meeting held on 29th May, 2007 reaffirmed its commitment to achieve 4 per cent annual growth in the agricultural sector during the Eleventh Plan (2007-12) and resolved that agricultural development strategies must be reoriented to meet the needs of farmers and urged the Central and State Governments to evolves strategy to rejuvenate agriculture. Towards improving the growth in the agriculture sector, recently, the Government has done the following:

- Launched the National Food Security Mission with an outlay of Rs. 4,882 crore for the Eleventh Plan period. It aims to produce additional 10 million tonnes of rice, 8 million tonnes of wheat and 2 million tonnes of pulses by the end of the Eleventh Plan.
- Launched the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), with an outlay of Rs. 25,000 crore which aims at achieving 4% annual growth in the agriculture sector during the Eleventh Plan period, through incentivising the States to invest more in the sector.
- Established National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) to assist and support in planning for rainfed areas.
- National Policy for Farmers, 2007 was brought out.
- Provided additional financial resources for irrigation.
- Imparted strategic focus on the national agriculture research effort.

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Sir, my supplementary pertains to growth